

(c) REMARKS

The claims are 20-26 with claim 20 the sole independent claim.

Consideration of the claims is expressly requested. New claims 20-26 replace former claims 4, 6, 11, 12 and 16-18.

Claim 20 corresponds to former claims 11 and 13-15. In addition, the subject matter at page 13, lines 19 and 20, relating to the second member being detachable, has been added. An index of the new claims 21-26 and the former claims to which they correspond follows:

Claim 21 = claim 12

Claim 22 = claim 16

Claim 23 = claim 4

Claim 24 = claim 6

Claim 25 = claim 17

Claim 26 = claim 19

Accordingly, the sole independent claim, claim 20, now includes the subject matter of claims 1, 13, 14 and 15, as well as the disclosure at page 13, lines 19-20 relating to the second member being detachable. The only grounds for rejection which remain in issue, accordingly, is the rejection of claims 14 and 15 which were rejected as obvious over Polan in view of Kramer. The other grounds for rejection have been obviated by the amendment to the claims.

The Examiner has argued, inter alia, that Polan does not teach the second members being disposed over upper surfaces of adjacent ones of the first member. To meet that defect, the Examiner has cited Kramer Fig. 9 and its supporting disclosure.

Kramer is said to teach first members disposed with a gap, wherein for the second members, hard backing 64 is disposed over upper surfaces of two adjacent ones of the first members. The grounds of rejection are respectfully traversed.

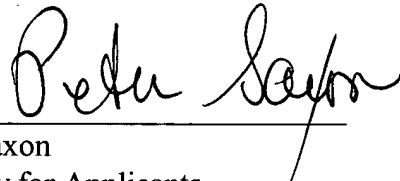
It is a feature of the present claimed invention that each of the second members is disposed over upper surfaces of two adjacent first members. In reviewing Figures 8-10 of Kramer '098, it is not seen that hard backing 64, identified as a second member, is disposed over an upper surface of two adjacent contact rings 44, identified as first members. As shown in Figs. 8-10 of Kramer, hard backing 64 is not disposed over an upper surface of contact ring 44.

In addition, the present claimed invention requires that the second member be detachable in order to facilitate maintenance of the apparatus, such as maintenance of the facing electrode. To the contrary, it is not seen that the hard covering 64 as shown in Kramer is readily detachable. In Kramer column 5, lines 69-75, it is disclosed that sealing bands 46 are backed by hard covering 64. Likewise, in Fig. 10, the outside contact ring 44 and sealing strip 47 are employed together with a sealing strip 46 and back-up member 64 on the other side. As noted in column 4, lines 50-55 and column 5, lines 6-11, a hard backing, such as PVC 64, reinforces sealing bands 46. In order to provide a strong seal it is clear that the hard backing which reinforces the sealing bands is not readily detachable, but permanently joins to the bands to prevent leaks and the like.

Accordingly, it is submitted that none of the references, whether considered alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the present claimed invention nor renders it unpatentable.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Peter Saxon", written over a horizontal line.

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